



Spotlight on Wellness

Increase strength, reduce stress with yoga

Article by Kendra Divine

Something within me clicked into place when I found yoga more than 20 years ago. I immediately fell in love with the practice. I loved that yoga could reflect exactly how I was feeling. If I wanted to feel strong I could practice power yoga, if I felt creative I could practice vinyasa yoga, or if life had been stressful I could practice restorative yoga. Yoga gave me the ability to try different styles and vary my focus between strength and flexibility.

Whether a novice or a long-time practitioner, yoga offers numerous benefits to mental health, fitness, and overall wellness. Yoga encourages each individual to simply start. No mat or special clothing is required. There are numerous free apps and videos. Yoga with Adrienne and Breathe and Flow are popular on YouTube for beginners; and, for those interested in advanced poses, Dylan Werner and Ashley Galvin offer online classes as well. I started with a DVD from Target until I began going to yoga studios, but now I prefer to practice from home and subscribe to Alo Moves where all my favorite teachers have online classes.

If you prefer to be in a group setting for support and motivation, there are also local gyms and studios which offer yoga classes. Whether you go to a studio or practice at home, listen



for the cues to learn about proper alignment and tips for increased strength and flexibility.

No one starts yoga with the ability to do a one-arm handstand, or know all the styles and poses by name. Not many people who practice yoga are like the super bendy influencers seen on Instagram. Yoga is a unique practice shaped by each individual. You start somewhere, and each day allows you to start again. I like to start each day with some basic yoga stretches and a few minutes of meditation.

No matter your age or skill level, incorporating yoga into your life will also enhance your wellness.

Create a practice that will meet your unique mental health and fitness needs. Work your way to whatever skill level is the right fit for you. Start with a few moments of mindful meditation, or hold a few yoga poses for five full breaths. Lengthen your inhale and exhale. Allow your mind to calm. Enjoy the benefits of yoga for your mind and body. Namaste.

Over years of practice, some of the core yogic principles have become important to me and my overall wellness.

Self Study (Svadyaya)

This has been the greatest gift from yoga. Each day, whether I have five minutes or two hours to practice, yoga encourages me to turn inward and ask why I feel a certain way, act a certain way, or how I could improve in a certain way. Yoga allows me to quiet my mind, focus on my practice, and find strength from within.

Contentment (Santosha)

This has been the hardest life lesson from yoga. As I learn to accept my strengths and weaknesses on the mat in certain poses, I am learning to accept my strengths and weaknesses as an individual. Yoga encourages me to accept myself as I am, and enables me to extend this grace to others as well.

Tips from Care ATC

Safe grocery shopping during COVID-19

1. Minimize trips to the store. Try to buy enough food for one or two weeks.
2. Stay at least six feet away from others when shopping.
3. Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering.
4. Wipe down your cart. Most stores provide sanitizing wipes.
5. Reduce your time at the store by making a list of items, organized based on the layout of the store to prevent going from one side of the store to the other.
6. Write your list on paper instead of your phone. Keep your phone in your pocket or purse.
7. Use touchless payment if possible. If you must handle money, a card, or a keypad be sure to use hand sanitizer right after.
8. Use hand sanitizer after you leave the store and wash your hands when you get home.
9. Give your reusable bags a break for now: opt for the paper or plastic disposable options.



SWEET TREAT: Banana Split Berry Yogurt Parfait



Yogurt can be a delicious, healthier substitute for ice cream or whipped cream in any recipe. Try this banana split berry yogurt parfait! Recipe provided by the American Heart Association.

Servings: 4
Prep time: 10 minutes
Calories: 157
Protein: 6g
Fiber: 2g

Ingredients

- 1 1/3 cups of fat-free yogurt
- 1 cup sliced strawberries
OR 1 cup mixed berries
- 1 large banana, sliced
- 1/4 cup low-fat granola
- 1 tablespoon cocoa
- 1 tablespoon confectioner's sugar
- 2 teaspoons hot water

Directions

To assemble parfaits, in small dish, layer about 1/3 cup yogurt, 1/4 cup sliced strawberries, 1/4 cup sliced bananas and sprinkle with 1 tablespoon granola.

In small cup, stir together cocoa, confectioner's sugar and hot water until smooth. Drizzle 1 teaspoon over each parfait. Enjoy!

GET FIT: Ways to Improve Gut Health

Improve overall health by focusing on gut health

Why all the focus on gut health? It might seem obvious that gut health is important for the digestion and absorption of nutrients, but it may not be obvious that it is also critical for immunity, metabolism, blood chemistry, inflammation and even brain chemistry.

Eat more vegetables and fruits. The fiber in vegetables and fruits act as fuel or prebiotics for the beneficial bacteria in your microbiome and add bulk to keep things moving through the gut. Whole grains, nuts, beans, and legumes also have a similar beneficial effect. Choose organic foods whenever possible as herbicides in non-organic foods can kill beneficial bacteria and cause damage to the gut.

Eat fermented foods. Sauerkraut, kefir, kimchi, kombucha, tempeh and low sugar yogurt are good choices because they contain lactobacilli bacteria.

Take a high-quality probiotic supplement. Choose a version that is fresh and unprocessed. These would usually need to be refrigerated.

Use spices. Garlic, turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, and other delicious spices help to rid your gut of harmful bacteria. They also will not hurt the good bacteria.

Avoid antibiotics and NSAIDs whenever possible. Antibiotics are sometimes necessary, but they indiscriminately kill both bad and good bacteria in the gut. NSAIDs (Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) can damage the lining of the gut leading to "leaky gut syndrome" which is a condition where the intestinal lining has gaps in its junctions,

allowing food particles to leak into the bloodstream leading to allergies and inflammation.

Control stress. You probably already realize that stress effects your gut. The brain communicates with the gut via the nervous system and the gut produces neurotransmitters that affect the brain, so it is a two-way communication loop. Meditation, deep breathing, exercise, journaling, spending time with supportive friends and getting out in nature can all help reduce the negative effects of stress.

Have your spine checked by a chiropractor. As discussed above, the nervous system controls the gut so seeing a chiropractor to correct Subluxations can improve the nerve communication through the spine. Subluxations are a common cause of gut issues.

Many people will have good results from the basic things mentioned in this article but in some cases this not enough and more targeted specific approaches are necessary. Call our clinic and set up an appointment to consult with one of our doctors if you continue to have concerns. Our clinic also carries high-quality supplements.

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